

Adolphus

LETTERS, ETC.,

ON THE RESOURCES OF

THE ISLAND OF ANTICOSTI

ISSUED IN CONNECTION WITH

THE ABRIDGED PROSPECTUS

OF THE

ANTICOSTI ASSOCIATION,

1874.

Applications for Stock, and communications from intending
settlers, to be addressed to

WM. L. FORSYTH,
96 St. Francois Xavier Street,
MONTREAL.

MONTREAL :

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1874.

Anticost, Association.

QUESTIONS

ADDRESSED TO

MR. THOMAS J. TOUZEL, SHIPBUILDER, FISHER, &C.,
ENGLISH HARBOUR, ANTICOSTI ;

AND HIS

ANSWERS THERETO

IN REFERENCE TO

THE RESOURCES OF THE ISLAND OF ANTICOSTI,

January, 1873.

Question 1st.—State your opinion of the quality of the timber growing on the Island ; and its adaptability for ship and house building purposes ; and an idea of the quantity of spruce and pine per acre ; and of all qualities fitted for cutting into saw-logs, or railway sleepers per acre ?

Answer.—Up our way (English Harbour) there is a belt from the coast, four to eight or ten acres inland, all spruce and fir, mountain ash and winter birch. The spring time is the best for sawing and building. The land is as thickly wooded as ever can be, Any amount of railway sleepers, saw-logs, &c. Then running inland, you come on my great favourite the Juniper ; some call it Tamarac, Hackmatac or Larch ; the best timber in America for building ships ; there is plenty of it and of a large size. Four leagues below us there is pine, and on the south side of Salt Lake ; from that I am told, there is some right down to the eastern part of the Island.

Question 2nd.—The capabilities of Ellis Bay and Fox Bay as Harbours for large vessels ; and for forming docks, slips and ship yards &c. ?

Answer.—Ellis Bay is reckoned one of the finest Harbours on the St. Lawrence, capable of anything you desire. I do not think it is so with Fox Bay,—shallower water, and not so safe.

Question 3rd.—An idea of the total catch of fish of all kinds &c. on the coast of the Island ; and of the Salmon and Trout in the rivers ?

Answer.—I cannot form an idea of the catch of fish. There is a large quantity in English Bay where I was ; between the schooners and on shore there were at least 6,000 qtls. caught. Do not be uneasy as to fish, there is enough of it. As to Salmon. I do not think there is a large quantity—some rivers would give from 15 to 30 and 40 bbls. I know nothing about the Trout.

Question 4th.—The average winter temperature at both ends of the Island, and whether it would not be as comfortable to live on the Island during winter, as at Malbay, or any point on Gaspé?

Answer.—Not having been with anybody who could tell me anything about the temperature, I cannot exactly tell you. All I can say, it is not nearly so cold as on the north shore, a distance of only 24 miles ; nor do I think it so cold as Gaspé. Some people will laugh at this, but it is the fact. I have seen it myself, and the oldest settler where I am, tells me his potatoes were never blighted by frost before October. The reason of it is, in fine weather our land breeze, which blows all night, is southerly wind, which is of course the warmest we have.

Question 5th.—Do you think that you can be of use, in bringing the advantages of the Island before the notice of any of your friends in the Islands of Jersey and Guernsey?

Answer.—I do not doubt but I could get some to come and settle, but you are not prepared for it this spring (1873.) Your fisheries should be organized, so by coming over the following spring, they can fish through the summer, and make very high wages at it. That would put them in a position to have means to buy their winter's provisions, and work for themselves in the fall. I was the means of keeping six families there last fall, and I am taking more next spring to remain there. I intend to winter there myself, either for you, or for myself.

Question Lastly.—Generally, give any other information that may occur to you, from your great experience of the Island, and its surroundings.

Answer.—You want a large number of men to develop the resources of the Island. For fish and herring there is any

amount. In my last I averaged the boats at 100 qtls. each, but bear in mind that a great number would go to 200 qtls. instead of 100 qtls ; but it is better to have fish left on hand in the fall than to have more vessels than you can load. Whatever I tell you can be caught in fish and herring, you can depend upon it, and for farming, there cannot be better, as far as I have seen. Timber also there is any amount. There are swamps in the interior, but as I have not much time, I do not know much about them.

(Signed,)

"THOS. J. TOUZEL."

E X T R A C T S
 FROM
 SERIES OF LETTERS ON ANTICOSTI,
 CONTRIBUTED BY
WILLIAM A. CALNEK, Esq., C.L.S.,
 SURVEYOR TO THE ANTICOSTI COMPANY,
 TO
 THE "*BRITISH COLONIST*," HALIFAX, N. S.,
 JANUARY, 1874.

"In order to account for the very favourable opinions I hold concerning the value of the Island of Anticosti, it is necessary that I should make reference to its botanical productions, as these indicate, in a general way at least, the characteristics of both climate and soil. The timber of a country is also a guide to the quality and depth of its soil, and I shall endeavor to give some idea of the forests of this Island."

"Along the northern coast a ridge of hills extends, broken here and there by the passage of the streams which rise in the interior and flow in a generally northward direction to the north channel of the Gulf.

These hills slope gently to the south, in some places continuously to the southern margin of the Island, and in other places their slope terminates in the interior, leaving room for a sister range of elevations between it and the south coast line. This latter range I had an opportunity of examining; the former I know chiefly from the verbal reports given to me by fishermen and trappers. The south coast range reaches an average elevation of about 200 feet—perhaps a little more,—and is clothed with a dense growth of timber, some of it reaching a very large size. The forests here consist chiefly of soft wood trees, the most conspicuous being the white and black spruce, (*Pinus negra* and *Pinus*

alba;) the Fir (*Abies balsamea*;) and the Juniper or Hackmatac (*Larix Americana*.) The hardwood trees are represented, so far as my observation extended, by but a single species of any size, the white birch (*Betula papyracea*;) which sometimes attains very considerable proportions."

"The spruce trees which form the staple timber of the part of the Island under review, are adapted for manufacturing purposes, and the deals and boards made from them, for hardness and durability probably cannot be excelled by those produced in any part of the world, and before many years have passed away, the sounds of the lumberman's axe, and the whirling of busy mills will surely be heard in this region. Where no natural harbours now exist, artificial ones will be constructed; the streams—which are most abundant—will be deepened and improved, and the lakes dammed and made reservoirs, from which to draw a sufficiency of water during the dry season, to enable the sturdy stream-driver to float his logs from their forest heights to the scene of their manufacture by the sea; and all along the southern face of this coast line mountain range, hosts of immigrant settlers will hew out homes for themselves and families, and gather around them all the substantial necessities and comforts of life requisite to make them the abodes of happiness and contentment. Churches and Schools with the innumerable blessings and advantages which attend these institutions will be established, and foundations strong and lasting for educational, moral and religious culture of future;

"The hills of the coast range do not commence their ascent from the sea-wall but are set back from it, at a distance of about three-fourths of a mile; nor do they extend the whole length of the coast; their western extremity being fixed near S. W. point, and their eastern termination at or near Bradley's Station, where they begin to flatten out into the plain which forms the country at the east end of the Island."

"The wedge of land south of this range, and lying between it and the shore, affords the *locus* of very valuable peat bogs. I measured the thickness of these Peatbeds at several places where they cropped out upon the coast, and found them to possess an average depth of about 5 feet; but further inland, they are no

doubt of much greater depth. These deposits are destined to be of great economic value in the future, the quality of their contents being pronounced to be very superior."

"What has been said of the southern part of the Island may be affirmed with extended force of the northern. This mountain ridge is much longer and considerably more elevated, and the timber which clothes it is of larger growth; besides which, several kinds are found on it, in addition to those found elsewhere. I am indebted for this information to the testimony of several persons, who have traversed this part of the country. They agree in saying that in some places they saw groves of Pine (proper), but I could not determine to what species they belonged from the description given. The hardwood trees they described as being much more common than in other parts, and the streams they think better fitted for driving purposes, while they afford a greater number of mill-sites."

"As I have before said, the eastern end of the Island, consists of very level land, comprising many heaths and peat-bogs; and the same is true of the western end, in a limited degree however; for the surface is more undulating, and fewer heaths and bogs exist there. Over this portion of Anticosti I have travelled more than any other part, and I can therefore speak of it with entire certainty. With the exception of a few bogs—evidently the sites of former lakes—covering several hundreds of acres in the aggregate, the whole of this District is covered with green forest, consisting chiefly of black, white and red spruce, white birch, mountain ash, mountain maple (*acer montana*), fir and hackmatac. The last named valuable tree exists in considerable numbers, and is the largest I have ever seen, some of them reaching a diameter of more than two feet at the stump. These grow chiefly on the borders between the meadows and adjoining higher lands, and in the immediate neighbourhood of streams, and I imagine would prove very valuable for shipbuilding purposes. Much of the spruce is large enough to be made into deals and boards, much more is fitted for joistings and building materials, and still more would make excellent railway sleepers and piles."

"In fine, while the Island cannot be said to be distinguished

by the size of its timber, or by the possession of the most valuable kinds, it may truly be reckoned among the countries, which have an abundance and variety of that material."

"The wild fruits common on the Island are the strawberry, raspberry, blue berry, bake apple or marshberry and cranberry. Of the latter there are two distinct species, viz, the low cranberry (*Oxycoccus macrocarpa*) and tree-cranberry (*Viburnum opulus*). The latter is extremely abundant, both in the interior and on the coast. On the 1st November last I made an inland journey, and was surprised at the profusion of these berries. They were then thoroughly ripe, yet adhering to the branches, and could have been gathered by bushels. The marshberry resembles the brambleberry in form, but grows only on the elevated and dry bogs. The blossom is like that of the strawberry, but the fruit differs essentially in flavour, and in bearing only a single berry on a stalk; and also in possessing a mucilaginous character, if I may so name it. It is a very healthful berry, and when stewed with the half-ripened cranberry makes a very palatable sauce. It is so plentiful that one can gather a quart in a few minutes. The strawberry grows very luxuriantly, wherever the forest has been removed, as does also the raspberry. The former I think could be cultivated to great advantage, the soil being peculiarly well adapted to its growth. Besides the berries before named the gooseberry (*Ribes cynosbati*); is everywhere found. I observed that one variety produced a larger fruit than the same kind here. There are several other small fruits not named above, among which the bilberry or wild pear, the tree of which is the earliest flowering one to be found; its delicate white blossoms produce a very pleasing appearance in June."

"It may not be out of place here to say a few words as to how the Island is watered. I have already stated that the mountain ranges on both the north and south sides, are occasionally pierced by valleys forming the channels of rivers, or more properly rivulets. Perhaps no country in the world of the same area, can boast of an equal number of streams, and certainly none could be more generously furnished with water. There are lake expansions on nearly all the streams, some of which are very picturesque and beautiful; besides being the spring and autumn

homes of myriads of ducks, geese, gulls and gannets. In addition to these river-lakes, as they may be called, there are to be found near the coast line, frequently separated from it only by a sea wall of moderate breadth, a great number of salt and fresh water lagoons, furnishing breeding places for uncounted sea fowl. Scarcely can the traveller pass over a hundred yards along the sea-coast, without finding the lucid and sparkling waters welling up through fissures in the rock. Many of the springs come to the surface between high and low water lines, and none of them seem to be diminished by drought, or materially increased by rains."

"Several particulars must be taken into account in explaining the phenomena connected with the climate of this Island. It is a well known and widely recognised fact, that large bodies of water around the shores of a country, have a largely modifying influence on its climate. This was strikingly exemplified during the past summer in Anticosti. While the inhabitants of our inland cities were seeking relief and refuge from the heat of their respective localities, some at Gaspé, others at Cacouna, and others still in the mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire, we were having at Ellis Bay the most enjoyable weather possible, the heat never being oppressive during the day, while the nights were filled with a delicious coolness."

"Another cause probably contributes toward a favourable modification of its climate. I refer to the position of its surface, which I have before said, has a gradually sloping direction southward, thus receiving a greater number of solar rays on a given area, and in consequence a greater degree of heat. The colour of the soil also, being black, the absorption of the heat rays is much increased, adding still more to the warmth at the surface, which is not entirely dissipated before the snow falls in November and December. That this is the case seems to be certain from the fact that in the forest a stake may be driven with tolerable ease through the snow and slightly frozen layer of earth next it, to any desired depth into the ground during the winter season. A Mr. Wright who has spent seven winters on the Island is my authority for this statement. He also told me it was unusual for the frost to penetrate more than five or six inches be-

low the surface. It may be easily conceived then, that the frost disappears with the melting of the snow in May or June, when the process of heat absorption recommences, and very rapidly warms the exposed black surfaces, and fits them for the reception of seed much earlier than the latitude would render probable."

LETTER FROM

MR. JAMES A. WALKER, MONTREAL,

TO

JOHN U. GREGORY, ESQUIRE,

DEPARTMENT OF MARINE AND FISHERIES, QUEBEC,

AND

ANSWER THERETO;

IN REFERENCE TO

*THE ISLAND OF ANTICOSTI.*JOHN U. GREGORY, ESQ.,
Quebec.

Montreal, 6th March, 1874.

MY DEAR SIR,—As you are already aware, I am engaged in assisting Mr. Forsyth in his laudable efforts to complete the organization of a Joint Stock Co., for the purpose of colonizing the Island of Anticosti, and of developing its resources. I may say that the policy of Mr. Forsyth, is to offer liberal inducements to the fishermen, and other inhabitants of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and the Maritime Provinces, and to all desirable settlers from whatever quarter, to come in and settle on the Island, and avail themselves of its unrivalled resources ; by granting them land on favourable terms (in fee simple ;) and by encouraging them to exert themselves to establish on it, happy homes of competence and independence. To this end, the Company will see to it, that ample stores of provisions, salt and merchandise shall be kept on the Island to meet the requirements of the settlers ; which will be sold to them at reasonable rates, in exchange for their fish and oil and other produce ; and exertions will be made to attract merchants and traders to the Island, so that through the influence of a healthful competition, those hardy “toilers of the

sea" may obtain the proper market value of the products of their labour.

From your long connection with the Department of Marine and Fisheries, and intimate knowledge of the wants of a maritime population, and also of the comparative advantages which Anticosti offers to intending settlers : I should feel obliged if you would kindly drop me a few lines expressing your views as to the feasibility of the enterprise ; and any remarks or advice, which your experience may suggest, shall be thankfully received and duly appreciated.

Believe me to be, &c., &c.,

(Signed), JAMES A. WALKER.

Box 246, P.O., Montreal.

ANSWER.

Quebec Branch,

DEPARTMENT OF MARINE AND FISHERIES,

QUEBEC, 7th March, 1874.

MY DEAR SIR,—I duly received your letter of the 6th instant, and note contents.

Referring to that portion, which requests me to express my views of the advantages of the Island of Anticosti to settlers, I can only repeat, what I have already said to many, viz : Anticosti is the heart of the Gulf of St. Lawrence ! Look at the map, and judge for yourself. East, West, North and South, are the great fishing fields so much boasted of, and held in such high estimation, as to be the most important international question affecting this Dominion. Consequently as a trading port, Anticosti has no rival. As a fishing station I can only refer you to the Annual Reports of the Department of Marine and Fisheries, wherein the results of the few resident fishermen's operations are recorded, and which clearly show what can be done. You must bear in mind, that the few people on the Island, have not hitherto had any right to settle there ; but thousands visit its shores, whose catch of fish is credited in the statistics of Gaspé, Magdalen Islands and other points.

What more can I say? I have gone all round the Island; and for ten years past have been in constant communication with the lighthouse keepers and others; and can fully corroborate all that the Anticosti Association's pamphlet says of it. I have also visited every fishing station on the Labrador coast. I consider Anticosti a perfect paradise, in comparison to the shores on which are established the trading posts of the wealthy Jersey merchants, who are really reaping the profits of our mines of wealth in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

As to emigration you need not be anxious. Let the people know that they can make a home on the Island, and they will be glad to settle there by thousands, for they have no such spot in other quarters, where the fishing is considered anything approaching to it.

I am, &c., &c.,

(Signed), "J. U. GREGORY."

JAMES A. WALKER, Esq.,
Montreal.

LETTER FROM
 MR. JAMES A. WALKER, MONTREAL,
 TO
 WM. COUPER, ESQ., NATURALIST, &c., MONTREAL,
 AND
 ANSWER THERETO AND REPORT
 IN REFERENCE TO
THE ISLAND OF ANTICOSTI.

Montreal, 11th March, 1874.

WILLIAM COUPER, Esq.,
 Naturalist, &c.,

DEAR SIR,—I have read with interest your report on the resources of the Island of Anticosti, as published in the *Montreal Herald* of the 4th Sept., 1872; in which you give the result of your observations of the Eastern portion of the Island, near Fox Bay; and as I am informed that you spent some months of the past summer at the other extremity, near Ellis and English Bays; may I ask you to be good enough to embody your impressions of the capabilities of this portion of the Island in a letter, which you may allow me to publish in the Appendix to the Prospectus, shortly to be issued by the Anticosti Association. I am now collecting on the part of the Association, such facts and statistics as are available to show the public the true position of Anticosti, as regards its soil, climate, forests, fisheries and other resources; and knowing the high esteem in which you are deservedly held by this community, both as regards your scientific attainments, and honourable character, I shall value very highly any statement you may find yourself justified in making in favour of Anticosti, as a field for successful colonization, and where industrious men may, with proper encouragement from the proprietors of the soil, build up a prosperous and contented community.

I have the honour to be, &c., &c.,

(Signed), "JAMES A. WALKER."

ANSWER.

Montreal, 12th March, 1874.

JAMES A. WALKER, Esq.

DEAR SIR,—I duly received yours of yesterday, and in answer thereto beg to send you affixed, a short report of my observations last summer on the Western end of the Island of Anticosti. The Island, in my opinion, contains manifold resources for successful colonization; and I shall be delighted to hear of the rapid progress of your Company with their project.

I am, &c., &c.,

(Signed), WM. COUPER.

ANTICOSTI.

COUPER'S VISIT TO THE WEST END.

The Western end of the Island of Anticosti was visited by me in June, 1873. I landed at Ellis Bay, where Capt. Setter and a French family reside. From the day of my arrival (14th June) until I left in July, the weather was favourable, and all that could be desired for fishing and inland operations. I noticed that rain fell more frequently at Ellis Bay than it did at Fox Bay in the previous year; its duration, however, was not sufficient to interfere with fish-drying.

The soil on the South-Western portions is excellent, and superior to that of the East or North-East of the Island. There are meadows attached to Capt. Setter's farm, which annually produce grass and hay sufficient to feed forty head of cattle; and the Capt. and his neighbour can boast of as pure a breed of cattle as are found throughout the Dominion.

The greater portion of forest on the North and East of Ellis Bay consists of Pines, in size and distribution equal to the woodlands on the North of the St. Lawrence below Quebec. At Ellis Bay I have seen stumps of pines measuring from 18 to 24 inches diameter at their base. In speaking of pines I include juniper, tamarac, cedar and spruce. There are also clumps of

birch trees, some of which are of large size. The forest growth of Anticosti is most rapid. A son of Gamache informed me, that on the point of land west of Capt. Setter's house, fifteen years ago there were very few trees ; to-day, it is a dense forest of pines, many of large size. Wild gooseberries, currants and strawberries of large size, are abundant at Ellis Bay in July.

I visited English Harbour on the 26th July. The forest behind this settlement produces trees superior to those of Ellis Bay. In fact the soil is richer. At the above date, potatoes were in flower, cabbage looked remarkably well ; and Mr. Hospice Miville pointed out to me a rhubarb plant, brought from the south shore on the 15th July when it was a mere sprout, attaining after a duration of twelve days in Anticosti soil, the height of sixteen inches of stem and leaf. There are fifty-five houses and fish stages at English Harbour, having at that time, a population of 600 souls. Four years ago, there were only seven buildings at the place. I was informed that the distance between this Harbour and Ellis Bay is about six miles in a direct line ; three of forest, and the remainder, plains ; through which a road could be made at a trifling cost.

The fishermen of English Harbour will always find abundance of cod in season, and within easy reach of the coast in that locality. The harbour abounds with marine life ; a species of *Echinus* is so common that every ledge of rock is covered by them. It is also the favourite resort of shoals of herring and capelin. The residents of English Harbour are contented and comfortable ; the men are industrious fishermen, brought up to a seafaring life from boyhood. They keep up regular communication with their friends on the South mainland ; and are not so backward in obtaining the news of the world as people imagine.

The Island is situated between $49^{\circ} 4'$ and $49^{\circ} 53'$ North latitude, and $61^{\circ} 38'$ and $64^{\circ} 35'$ West longitude from London, as determined by ten observations on the Eclipses of Jupiter's first satellite.

Ellis Bay is 15 miles east from West point ; Becscie River 7 miles east from Ellis Bay ; Otter River 7 miles east from Becscie ; Jupiter River 9 miles west of South-west Point ; Dauphin River 4 miles east of South-west point ; Pavillon River 15 miles east of

Daûphin ; Chaloûpe River 8 miles west of South Point. There is a good river on the North side called Salmon River. The salmon found in these rivers average from 8 to 12 lbs. weight. I have no doubt that in a few years hence, the West end will be transformed into a pretty district. There is every facility for the extension of productive land behind English Harbour. The places to look after at present are where the people are settled. They are the best judges of harbours, fishing stations and home comforts. It was a mistake to select Ellis Bay last summer for storehouses, as it is too far from the settled portions of the Island. English Harbour, in my opinion, is the place destined for the first progress. It is easily reached by vessels, and the harbour can be improved. Vessels have to pass it, on their way to the North shore ; and it is a place of call by traders. The management should be in the hands of a skilful man, who has had experience in marine products, and the wants of the people.

(Signed), "WM. COUPER."

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